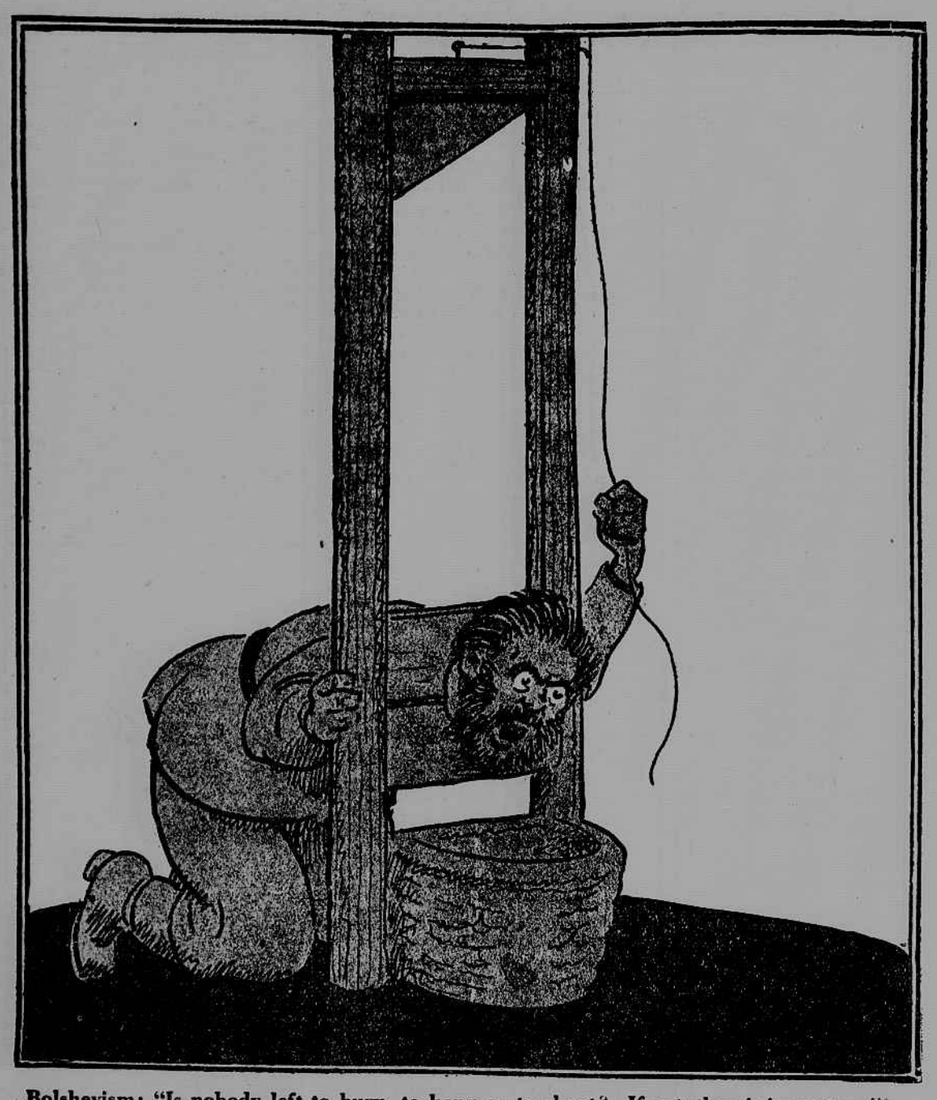
Fresh Perspectives on Events of the Day Abroad Which Are Making History

The Consequence



Bolshevism: "Is nobody left to burn, to hang or to shoot? If not, then it is my turn!"
—From *Notenkraker*, Amsterdam

Decision on Shantung May Change Whole Orient

THE decision of the peace conference in regard to the Shangtung Peninsula is discussed in "The Manchester Guardian" by Liang Chi-chao, a prominent Chinese scholar of economics and former Minister of Finance and of Justice, who writes:

"Few people in Europe realize how momentous was the decision taken by the council of three in favor of Japan on the Shantung question. Without exaggeration, we say that it exceeds in importance all the other territorial adjustments made by the conference, because of the area and population affected. No well informed man can have any doubt that it will profoundly modify the history of the Asiatic continent, if not that of the whole world.

"It is unnecessary to emphasize the justice of China's demands; they have never been seriously questioned even by the Japanese. Everybody admits that the territory of Kiao-chau is in every sense purely Chinese; that the occupation by the Germans in 1898 was an act of violence; that by entering into the war on the side of the Allies China nullified all her treaties with Germany, and that the so-called agreements between Japan and China were forced upon the latter by threats of war. But Japan is strong and China is weak; it is much easier to sacrifice the latter than to offend the former. Great Britain and France were bound by a secret treaty to support Japan, and President Wilson could not sacrifice his league of nations, which would have been put in danger by the threatened withdrawal of Japan. There we have the whole story. Some people believe that in supporting the claims of the Japanese Great Britain must have decided upon a new foreign policy, which may have its ultimate object in diverting America's attention to the Pacific Ocean. Events will show the correctness of this view, which need not concern us here. Let us simply consider the necessary consequences of the decision taken.

The Japanese Pincers

"The American communiqué said that Japan was to obtain all the rights formerly belonging to Germany only as an economic concessionaire, and that Japan voluntarily engaged to hand back the Shantung Peninsula in full sovereignty to China.. Let us see how far these statements are from the truth. According to the same communiqué, Japan will have the right to establish a settlement in Tsingtau, the only port in Kiao-chau, and to maintain a special police along the railway. In a country where the Japanese enjoy extra-territorial rights it means that the piece of territory beginning from the settlement where the railway starts and ending in the terminus, which is at present at Tsinan, the capital of the province, becomes virtually Japanese territory. It is true that many of these rights were possessed by the Germans, but, then, Germany is thousands of miles away from China and has many other interests to consider, while Japan is at our very door and can afford to give us all her unwelcome attention.

"In fact Shantung will become a second Manchuria, and, strategically, Northern China will be at the mercy of Japan, for from Tsingtau Japanese troops can reach Pekin within twenty-four hours, and in less than half that time the trunk lines connecting the capital while the Yangtse Valley can be cut. Peking will be firmly grasped in a pair of Japanese pincers—Manchuria in the north and Shantung in the south.

The Economic Side

"Let us see the economic side. Japan, in spite of her organization, is a country without resources; she has only a few small coalfields, already rapidly becoming worked out, and practically no iron ore. Nothing made her realize her impotency more than when America prohibited the export of steel on entering the war. In recent years great efforts have been made to secure her needs at the expense of China. She had obtained already two big coalfields and a considerable iron deposit at the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War. By presenting to China an ultimatum in 1915 she extorted from us one of the largest iron deposits, that of Anshan, on the South Manchurian Railway. She controls also some 450,000,000 tons of high-grade ore in the Yangtse Valley. But the Manchurian ores are mostly low-grade magnetite, partly unworkable, and the coal can only be used to a small extent for metallurgical purposes. Again, she possesses no coalfield near enough to be employed for the smelting of the Yangtse iron ores.

"The peace conference has given her 240,000,000 tons more of hematite ore and more than one billion tons of good coal, all near the railway, the extension of which will traverse three big coalfields containing billions of tons of coking coal within economic distance of the Yangtse Valley. Thus as the result of the Paris conference Japanese monopoly of Chinese iron industry has been assured. The export of Chinese iron ore to Japan has been of extraordinarily rapid growth before 1912 it was negligible, but it will probably reach a million tons in 1920. With the enormous advantages just acquired she will be able to increase this supply four to five times within the next ten years. Those who know the ambitions of Japan can hardly doubt that when she can build as many ships with her own steel as she likes Japan will assume a different attitude toward such questions as racial equality, and Great Britain may have reasons to think differently of the value of the Anglo-Japanese alliance as the means of safeguarding India.

"So much for the material side. But the Japanese victory is by no means confined to it. What Japan has been striving for during the last few years is that she should be recognized by the powers as the only spokesman of Eastern Asia. The famous twenty-one demands, the Lansing-Ishii agreement, as well as the recent agreements with China, all point to the same effort to realize what is known as the Japanese equivalent of the Monroe Doctrine.

"What is China going to do? Now, in order to understand the psychology of the Chinese people at the present moment it is necessary to remember what happened during the war. During the decade before 1914 China had been comparatively free from direct military aggression. But the world war upset the balance of power and Japan at once took the advantage. She showed her hand first of all in preventing China from entering the war in 1914. Then came the twenty-one demands and the subsequent ultimatum. The undisguised aid given to the Manchurian brigands in Shantung and the Chungchiatung incident were but part of the same scheme. Every time the Chinese government yielded against unmistakable public opinion, but the people remained calm, because they were told each time that our case would receive a just hearing at the peace conference. As the struggle became more and more intense, the utterances of the Eureapon statesmen maintaining that the war was a war of right against might, and the high-sounding idealism of President Wilson attracted widespread attention and roused our national aspirations. The sympathy of the Allied diplomatic agents all over China, often openly expressed, encouraged us still more.

"Rightly or wrongly, therefore, the Chinese people believed seriously that the downfall of Germany meant also the end of militarism all the world over and the peace conference a unique opportunity for redressing our wrongs. Convinced of the justice of their cause and confident of the sympathy of the Allied powers, they put their case plainly before the Paris conference. How thoroughly they have been disappointed is tragic history."

Colonial Fighting Menaces India

FIGHTING is on again along the much troubled north-eastern frontier of India. This time it is not a mere cattle raid by some mountain tribe, but a regulation colonial war between the imperial forces and the powerful Ameer of Afghanistan, whose predecessors have so often menaced the safety of the border. Thus it happens that the Khyber Pass, the famous northwestern gate of India, is again in prominence in the English newspapers. Writes Arthur W. Howlett in "The Manchester Guardian":

"The Khyber Pass is one of the historic spots of the world, one of those unhappy places which, like Belgium, has had too much history. From the beginning of man's era upon earth it has been the main avenue of inrush upon India; it has seen so much of slaughter that the very stones which speckle its arid hillsides might be the bones of dead men. There are many men to whom India has meant just the Khyber, the Khyber and all its puzzling perplexities, and there are men, servants of the empire, living hard and perilous lives, to whom it is so even yet.

"One of the problems of India has been to find a 'scientific' frontier—that is to say, a frontier consistent with all the complexities of strategy, ethnography and polity. In part it has solved itself along natural lines; in part it has evolved itself along the lines of a definite policy. It is best, perhaps, that it should always retain some degree of elasticity, for, naturally, the demands made upon it vary very considerably. Akbar the Great was no more free from it than is the British Raj of to-day, and it cost him twenty years of his bloodiest fighting before he could reduce it to a semblance of order. When one speaks of the Indian frontier one has to understand that it is not everywhere a clearly defined line. There is a boundary where British territory begins or ends, but beyond that it is not immediately Afghanistan. There intervenes a belt of neutral territory inhabited by wild tribes who own absolute allegiance neither to the Ameer nor to Great Britain. Having been subsidized by the latter now for many years these tribesmen have learned on which side their bread is buttered, and are to all intents our allies; also from their ranks we have drawn recruits to filter into some of the finest Indian regiments, where their martial proclivities can find an outlet. Others are converted into 'levies,' receiving a monthly allowance and a gift of arms and ammunition. These still dwell in their own country but undertake to keep open the roads, protect telegraphs, arrest marauders, and, what is perhaps most to the point, refrain from marauding themselves. This neutral belt may be as much as 100 miles broad.

"It will be seen, then, that when the Afghan leaves his own territory he is not necessarily at once invading British territory, though he may be said to be encroaching on our preserves. It is difficult to carry the lines of the so-called 'frontier' in the head, for a few casual glances at the map leave one with a vague idea of a confused jumble of mountains. And if it is so in the map it is no less so to the traveller. I have touched at many different parts of the 'frontier,' but have always had a confused notion of my exact topography. One can, however, reduce the tangle to fairly simple elements by disarticulating the less salient details. The great River Indus hereabouts runs almost due north and south, and the Kabul River, coming from the west out of Afghanistan, cuts into it at right angles. The latter runs close to and in line with the Khyber Pass itself, and Peshawar stands hard by it. Then, the huge masses of the Hindu Koosh turn abruptly south, leaving a sort of reëntrant angle on a projecting tongue of low ground whose tip is in the Khyber Pass itself. Thereafter they run down due south as far as the seaboard, assuming the name of the Suleiman range and hedging in India completely on the west. The Indus River runs all the way right at their feet to the India side of them, so that the whole forms a vast natural fortification of a wall and ditch. When an invader has forced the passes he has still had to make good the passage of the broad Indus stream, and its banks have witnessed not a few desperate battles accordingly. Thus presented, the line of the frontier is simple, but it has to be remembered that about its confrontation with Afghanistan it runs into many recessions, and its outline is like that of a broken coast. Moreover, the area is vast and the country itself a chaotic mass of mountains and hills.

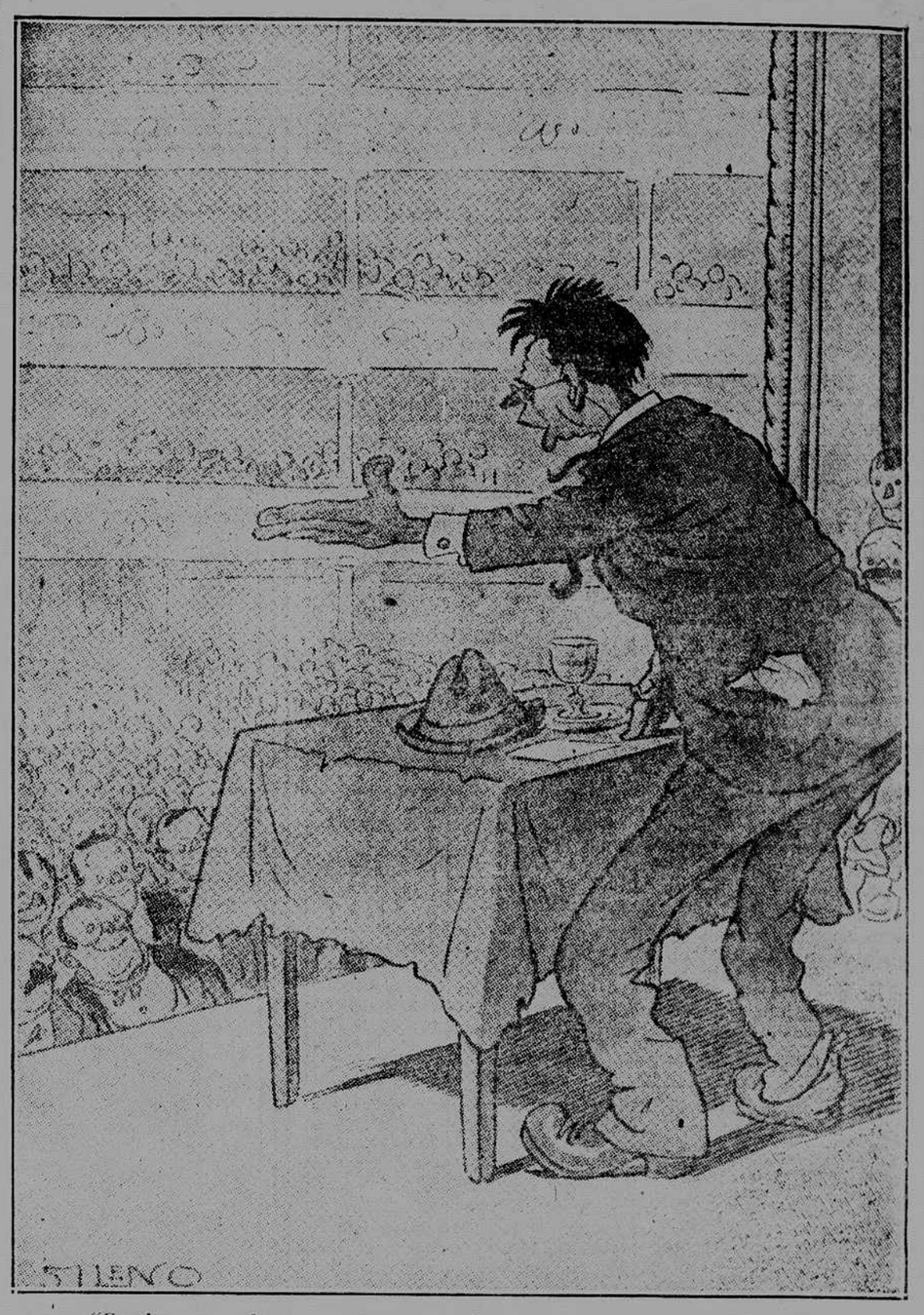
"Such a country was difficult to subdue or to hold in the old days, entailing a great multiplication of troops to keep watch in the numerous valleys. With aeroplanes and wireless the task of intelligence work will be much simplified, and mechanical transport will facilitate the movements of troops even over these trackless wastes.

"Peshawar itself, standing some few miles from the entrance to the Khyber, is a beautiful and striking city. I came to it first one mid-November, when the days were hot and sunny, with the enticing warmth of the winter day time, and the nights were foggy and chill. The cantonment, with its long, smooth roads, bordered and almost overarched by magnificent trees, its stretches of greensward, and its gardens retreating back to the white and blue walls of the bungalows, putting one in mind of Kew, is a sort of garden city of the tropics where the feast to the eye alone was a pure delight. And, as ever in these Indian places, there was the vociferation of bird and insect voices everywhere and the subtle flash and glint of wings in and out the shrubberies. By nightfall the air grew heavy with perfumes of the roses which bloomed in profusion everywhere, and mingled with it there came from the native city and from the servants' quarters behind the bungalows the pungent odors of native tobacco and wood fires. The stars glittered keenly above the fog, for it was but a ground mist, and their spangled masses were broken by the triangles of blackness which showed where the mountains walled in the dark, mysterious Khyber. Presently there came tapping an old man with a stick, and I saw it was the chokedar. Then I saw that, unlike other parts of India, the stick he held in his hand was a spear, and I remembered that here in this city the night was apt to run wild suddenly with heavy terrors. It is no unusual matter for the outlying parts of the city to be raided of a night. The silence is suddenly broken by shots and shouts, there is the red glare of a few burning huts, and next morning a much-gashed corpse or two in the city hospital.

"From the Afridi dwellings off the road deep trenches lead on to the road itself, so that the inhabitants can reach this sanctuary without exposing themselves to the shots of their neighbors. Life need never be dull for most of them, since they are always either waiting to shoot or be shot at.

"Beyond the boundaries of the cantonment the smiling fertility of green lawns and clambering roses abruptly ceases, and one comes on all the stark aridity of the frontier land. The road runs through it all straight to Jamrud, at the door of the pass, but either side is waste country, brown and dusty, shimmering with the sun, broken up by dry nullahs and empty water channels, with only a tower dwelling here and there, standing like a lighthouse at sea. Naturally, cultivation does not flourish, as it is impossible to live comfortably with your neighbor taking pot shots at you from his window. From this wild region you can ride back again and in ten minutes pass the great green in front of the club where Englishmen in white flannels are playing cricket and tennis or thundering up and down on their polo ponies, while English women in cool frocks sit in the verandas watching them and drinking tea."

The Future Politician



"Gentlemen, we have no programme of our own. No, but we have something better. We can oppose everything the other side proposes."
—From *Blanco y Negro*, Madrid

A Modern Bluebeard At His Work in France

WHY is a "Bluebeard"? This question is discussed by one of the Paris correspondents of "The Manchester Guardian." The occasion is the grewsome case of Landru, the mysterious Frenchman who for the last few years has made a regular trade of wife killing and maintained his "real" family on the proceeds. Investigation by the police shows, according to the Paris dispatches, that Landru has induced, by promising marriage, one victim after the other—all of them quiet, moderately well-to-do, elderly, middle class women—to move with their belongings to a secluded house in a remote suburb, killed them and disposed of the bodies in a manner hitherto unexplained, expropriated their money and other property, sold their furniture and then started on another similar operation. The psychological and historical background of the case is analyzed by the English correspondent as follows:

"Landru appears to be one of those great 'multiple murderers' who appear from time to time to horrify humanity. It is not surprising that his strange personality has quite eclipsed in popular interest here the debates of the peace conference. Such men have always aroused the greatest interest. One of them, Williams, the sailor, incidentally a dull and brutal individual, had the honor of an incomparable essay from the pen of De Quincey. His only claim to the title of artist conferred on him seems to have been that when at work he wore a fine flowered silk dressing gown. Williams was not in the same class with such murderers as Holmes, the wandering assassin of America; on a lower scale, Burke and Hare, of Edinburgh, or Pranzini and Prado in France, Marie Madeleine de Brinvilliers and La Voisin, and, perhaps most remarkable and least known of all, Pierre Basson, the speculative Boer in Cape Town. If, as is here assumed, Landru is guilty, he must take his place as one of the first practitioners of that gloomy and detestable art, trade or profession, murder.

"Between all these villains there are striking and interesting parallels, both in their methods and ways of thinking. To begin with, their motive is almost always money, though they differ widely in their ambitions in this respect, and they often use their dreadful art to perform acts of revenge and jealousy as well, as did Brinvilliers. Some of them wish for great wealth, like the little marquise with the big blue eyes and her famous 'powders of succession,' or Pierre Basson, with his imperious and strange necessity for great sums, expended no one knows how. Landru, like Holmes and Smith, was more modest; he seems to have had the mind of a small tradesman. He was content if he could make a decent living. Possibly he regarded this evil way of life much as an ordinary man who was called on so many times a year to make an excessively dangerous and unpleasant airplane flight might do. The Paris papers have hinted at dark and vicious motives to complicate the affair, but with a man of Landru's petit bourgeois way of thinking this does not seem to be a necessary hypothesis. He must be compared with Smith, the Englishman, who drowned women after marrying them, though a much larger and more cunning operator, in that, like him, he had a home and a wife and children, to whom he returned from time to time. The periodicity of his crimes, almost always twice a year, is scarcely compatible with an overwhelming and abominable passion.

"Systematic murder with Landru is no longer a black art, but a dingy business. From a technical point of view there are two main aspects in a professional murderer's methods which are especially interesting. Their first problem is their field of operations—where to select their victims. After they have done their work they are faced with the problem of the disposal of the bodies. The first is simple. They all work on the fringes of the human herd. Holmes chose men and women under a cloud, the poor family of a convicted man, discredited and dishonest individuals. Burke and Hare preyed on beggars, idiots and prostitutes of the lowest class. Basson flew at higher game—men in need of money; Pranzini sought out prostitutes; Landru had a weakness for widows of a certain age. The essential is that the victims should have no friends who would take an inconvenient interest in their disappearance.

"His method of approach was invariable. A man of unattractive appearance, in spite of the nonsense that is talked about his glittering eyes, he had one bait—marriage. All the extraordinary mistrustfulness of the French lower middle class woman vanished at that magic word. When he had exhausted his own circle of acquaintance he inserted advertisements in matrimonial papers and agencies.

"The Landru method is economy itself. He took a return ticket for himself; a single for the woman. Coal was scarce; his victims had to bring a sack with them. Later he went to their rooms and collected their furniture. He could not get good enough prices from them the dealers, so he contemplated a small store where he could sell 'direct to the consumer.' His books are well kept, with only the amount of secret code that a man in a hurry would use in his affairs—contractions and signs for whether the subject was interesting, possible, and so forth, the dates of their first meeting, a few facts about them that struck his as important. What he did with the bodies is of course not yet known. The police seemed to think that he destroyed them somehow by fire. The well known difficulty of disposing of a corpse this way is variously explained away in this case by a special scientific furnace, of which no trace has been found, or that he took his time and burnt only the bones, throwing the flesh away in lakes and lonely places in the vicinity.

"His personality deserves a passing word. A grave, bearded man, with sharp eyes, easy manners, he seems to have had a genius for sentiment. All his escaped subjects agree on that—his caressing manners, his sincere, courteous talk, his love of flowers and music. A figure to inspire sympathy in a woman who has not had a fair share of romance herself, this rather awkward rather pathetic middle-aged man."

:-: The Week Abroad :-:

The German National Assembly at Weimar ratified the peace treaty by a vote of 208 to 115. Ninety-five Deputies did not vote.

Rioting in Italy on account of the high cost of living continued in the beginning of the week. Shopkeepers in Rome reduced food prices 70 per cent in the hope of preventing the rioting from spreading to that city. Fresh trouble was reported at Genoa, Milan, Pisa, Leghorn, Pistoja, Arezzo and Palermo. Three persons were reported killed and many injured at Imola and Bologna. One person was killed and seven were injured in renewed rioting at Florence. In all the towns where there was trouble there was a general reduction of 50 per cent in the price of food and other necessaries, while the reduction in Florence was 70 per cent. In nearly all the places the mobs organized and were recognized by the authorities, with whom they worked in accord against the speculators. The mob organizations were called Chambers of Labor.

An anarchist plot to attack the central part of Rome with hand grenades and other explosives was exposed by the arrest of sixteen of the conspirators four hours before the time set for the attack.

As the week drew to a close, quiet was restored in the places where rioting had occurred. King Victor Emmanuel decreed that profiteers should be fined $2,000, be sentenced to from three months to three years in prison and have their stocks confiscated. The population of Florence was placed on rations and a general reduction of 50 per cent ordered in food prices. Troops occupied Florence and most of the places where there had been rioting. Reports from all the places where there had been trouble showed that the revolt was reacting against the people. Shops were closed, goods were lacking and it was not possible to buy anything at either the old high prices or the new low ones. Bitterness increased between the French and Italians at Fiume. It was reported to the Paris conference that at least nine persons had been killed and many wounded in the most recent disorders. Some versions represent the trouble as having been caused by brawls between individuals and groups over women, but the Italians take a more serious view. The Council of Five has appointed an inter-Allied commission of four to investigate the troubles in Fiume and on the Adriatic. Major General Charles P. Summerall is the American member of the commission.

The council of five in Paris decided that it was impossible to make peace with Bela Kun's government in Hungary.

England is less anxious for the trial of the ex-Kaiser in London than when the announcement was first made. General surprise was occasioned among the members of the American delegation in Paris by Lloyd George's statement that the trial would take place in London. The Americans had heard nothing of the decision from President Wilson before he left France. It is now said that the agreement was a tacit one, but is regarded as none the less binding.

The former Kaiser shows no anxiety over his forthcoming trial, but the recent Crown Prince is reported as saying, "The Allies can only have my dead body. I will myself decide on my life or death."

Secretary Lansing, it was announced in Paris, has been called home and Frank L. Polk, Acting Secretary of State, will take his place in Paris.

A national memorial service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, for Captain Fryatt, who was executed by the Germans for attempting to ram a U-boat. Captain Fryatt's body was taken to England from Belgium, and there was an imposing procession through the streets of London before and after the service in St. Paul's. The burial was at Dover Court, Captain Fryatt's home.

British statemen are apprehensive of the situation that may arise from the prevailing industrial unrest in Europe generally and especially in England, France and Italy.